

ON MIRACLES.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN

SAINT MARY'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

On the 21st and 28th SEPTEMBER, 1823;

BY THE

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Curate of St. Mary's Parish.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE no ambition to appear amongst Authors, and I trust good sense enough to know, that, under ordinary circumstances, a Parish Clergyman is best employed in the noiseless but useful tenor of his Clerical duties: there are times, however, and the present I conceive one, when the sacred cause of which he is the ordained advocate, suggests a different line of conduct, when silence appears a dereliction of duty, and a reluctance to engross public attention, may be rather the result of mistaken judgment, indifference, or timidity, than of well-regulated modesty. By this observation I do not wish to offend; there are some who treat the subject of the late asserted Miracles with ridicule, and think them only deserving of contempt; many who deem it sufficient, if in the intercourse of society, they freely express their incredulity; whilst not a few have met them with a tone and temper, which I fear, only exasperates, and of course defeats its ob-

ject. In the exercise of my private judgment I have pursued a different course—I give my opinions in the following pages, I trust, dispassionately; and I have been the more readily induced to contribute my mite towards the cause of true religion, that no one of my Reverend Brethren has as yet stepped into the van, to assert in this way the pure doctrine of our Reformed church, and to vindicate the miracles of our blessed Lord and Saviour from an unworthy comparison: May the God of all truth bless my humble effort to advance the glory of his name.

A SERMON,

&c.

LUKE vii. PART OF 20, 21, 22 VERSES.

“ Art thou he that should come, or look we for another ? *And in that*
“ *same hour*, he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and evil
“ spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus
“ answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things
“ ye have seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the
“ lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor
“ the Gospel is preached.”

WHEN the Minister of God undertakes the solemn duty of resisting what he deems erroneous, either in opinion or practice, his first effort should be, to remove from the minds of his auditory, any impression which they might entertain that his motives were not pure, or that his judgment was warped by prejudice or passion. I know not, my brethren, whether such a feeling prevails with any here, but of this you may rest assured, I shall conduct the enquiry into which we are about to enter, with calmness and moderation, with a due respect for the conscientious, even though in error, but, at the same time, with a fixed determination.—May the Almighty assist me to act upon it—with a determination, fearlessly to contend for sacred

truth, and by its legitimate weapons, argument and persuasion only. God forbid I should betray a righteous cause by unchristian violence, or imitate a bad example, * by mixing up the impure leaven of party feeling with the discharge of a pastoral duty. In speaking of a church which, it is my deliberate conviction, has corrupted † the truth, I shall draw my arguments from the acknowledged word of inspiration, which Romanist and Protestant alike receive; and as far as possible avoid every thing which could irritate those who differ from me; for irritation naturally closes up the avenues to conviction.

If I address any, therefore, whose intemperate zeal keeps alive that flame of religious discord which burns so fiercely in our island, let them learn, I am not here to strengthen prejudice, or to contend for a name. Protestants, we may condemn the delusion of our opponents, and yet, if we have not love to them as well as to one another, we are none of Christ's disciples. Romanists, permit us the same right of private judgment which you claim for yourselves: if the design of God be our conversion from the faith in which we had hoped to die, let it not surprise you that we examine the evidence you adduce, that such conversion is the Almighty's will. Your own pastors have declared that the outstretched arm of God ‡ has lately manifested his preference for your church, and vouchsafed a sign to

* See Note A.

† See Note B.

‡ See Note C.

lead us, wanderers, to the fold from which Satan seduced us;—deem it not wrong, if, in the spirit of Christian mildness, we accept the challenge which they proclaim, and enquire into a subject which involves our eternal interests. If in our enquiry after religious truth, we both resolve, scrupulously to reject all that reason condemns, or evidence contradicts, if we earnestly pray to God for that spiritual aid which alone can send *His* word with power to the heart, and guide us into truth—I hesitate not to say, our efforts shall be blessed—truth shall prevail over ignorance and error, and the divided Church of Christ be again united. Such bright anticipations sometimes come across the mind, which meditates upon Sacred things, and make it for a season forget the prevalence of vice and irreligion. Such visions of future happiness were revealed to the Prophet Isaiah, * and we cannot err in wishing for their accomplishment in our days. “The wolf shall
 “ dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down
 “ with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the
 “ fatling together, and a little child shall lead them;”
 (what a picture of Gospel peace, of religious harmony!)
 “The wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad,
 “the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, the
 “earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as
 “the waters cover the sea.”

It seems to me peculiarly our duty, and therefore it argues no presumption, to apply that reasoning faculty

* See xi. and xxxv. Chapters.

which God has given to the investigation of religious truth ; “such enquiries,” says an acute and learned divine, of the 17th century, “have this peculiar commendation above all other designs, that they gratify the most noble faculty of our souls and most immediately tend to re-advance the highest perfection of our rational being.” I mean not, however, to assert, that reason is to sit in judgment upon the counsels of the Omnipotent, and to reject whatever transcends the reach of a finite comprehension. The Almighty deals with us as moral agents ; he requires us to believe much which reason cannot account for ; this is the proper object of faith ; but HE graciously permits, nay he encourages, the rejection of every thing which the same faculty plainly discerns to be erroneous ; and, in numberless passages, even appeals to it, himself, as competent to decide upon the fitness of those moral laws by which he governs mankind. *

I trust, also, it will be at once conceded, that Scripture alone affords the standard to which reason should refer in all our religious enquiries. I am aware that upon this subject, the Roman Catholic entertains a different opinion ; and yet I appeal to the candid amongst them, whether the fluctuations of human opinion which is ever changing with the predominant character of the age, whether the influence which prejudice and passion,

* Consult Genesis iv. 7. xviii. Isaiah v. 1, 7. See also Job xxxviii. and following chapters in which the Almighty, by a direct appeal to reason, publicly proves how far his nature and his acts are above the reach of human comprehension.

exercise upon a corrupt nature, do not demonstratively suggest the necessity of a fixed and infallible standard to which we may, in all difficulties, refer? The beacon light which is to guide us in our darkling way, and to satisfy all our doubts, is the written word of God. Nor let it be forgotten that his holy Spirit will send its precepts with power to the hearts of all who make it their study and delight. I admire that docility which sends an enquiring Christian to his spiritual teacher; but give me also that service of perfect freedom, which asks no blind submission of the understanding, but permits me to apply even the doctrines of my instructor to the standard of the Gospel. "The words that I command thee," says the inspired Moses, "shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children." On the Sabbath day, Paul reasons * out of the Scriptures. The Eunuch † was perusing the word of God, when Philip began at the same Scriptures, and preached unto him Jesus. Of a child, it is said, Timothy ‡ had known the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto Salvation, which was in Christ Jesus. St. Luke declares the Bereans noble for this, || that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, comparing what they heard with what they read. What is written in the law? replies our Saviour, to a question of his enemies; he does not ask the enquirer what hast thou been taught, but § how readest thou? and though on many occasions

* Acts xvii. 2.

† Acts viii. 35.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 15.

|| Acts xvii. 11.

§ Luke x. 26.

we find him justifying himself and his doctrines by the authority of Scripture, he never once appeals to that of tradition. "Search the Scriptures, * for in them ye think "ye have eternal life--and they are they which testify "of me."

In that blessed volume, my friends, there is comfort under every trial, and counsel for every difficulty, admonition against every sin, and a promise for every victory. In the solitude of the sick chamber, the sufferer is not alone, who can thus hold converse with God. In this, the word of inspiration, the afflicted learn to look beyond the present scene to that future state where sorrow never enters. In the darkness which prevails among so many professors of Christianity, he who reads is at least in the way of obtaining light, and in a propitious hour the Spirit of God may cause the seed of Eternal life to spring up into an abundant harvest. These are the blessings of that Gospel which Christ preached to the poor, and which, it is one of the dogmas of the Roman Catholic church to deny to their perusal. This alone, is sufficient to prove, that the lapse of time has not removed that fundamental difference which, in the 16th century, separated the church of Christ into two great divisions, and so long as it continues, it must ever constitute a line of demarcation between them.

If I could abstract from my consideration the

* John v. 39.

many unscriptural errors of the Roman Catholic church ; if they consented to restore to its place in the Decalogue the second commandment, which condemns their carved images, and their prayers to Saints ; if they renounced that monstrous doctrine that departed souls abound in merits not only sufficient, but more than sufficient for their own acceptance, which surplus, therefore, they may transfer to others ; if they gave up that “fond” thing, Purgatory, vainly invented and founded on no warranty of Scripture ; if they abjured that awful error of asking the mediation of some canonized Sinner, thus superseding the alone intercession of Christ ; if they no longer maintained that strange contradiction * that a daily Miracle transfers the elements of Bread and Wine into the veritable body, and the veritable blood of Christ ; if their worship of the Most High were no longer in a tongue with which the vast majority of Roman Catholics is unacquainted ; I should still say, that a Church cannot be Scriptural which makes the word of God of none effect by its tradition, and teaches for doctrines the commandments of men ; which closes my ears against the speaking oracles of Jehovah, and makes my knowledge of my Redeemer, and of my own heart, to depend upon the brief report of a frail sinner like myself, sending me, as it were, to broken cisterns for the living waters of Salvation. Are there any of this communion within the hearing of my voice, let them receive, without resentment, the coun-

* See Note D.

sel which I offer, with all the earnestness of one who desires their eternal happiness. I do not ask them to renounce the name by which they are called, but I would exhort them in the name of truth, and for the sake of their own souls, resolutely to assert their undoubted right of perusing the word of God, the charter of their Christian privileges, and to cast off that galling slavery which fetters the mind, and would controul even the very thoughts.

Following the guidance of holy Scripture, and we can acknowledge no other—the subject before us seems to involve two distinct considerations—shall we suppose, that possessing a clear revelation of the Almighty's will, any truth therein contained, requires, at this day, the enforcement of a Miracle? And again—allowing for the sake of argument, that such an attestation is necessary; do those recent events possess the distinctive characters which demonstrate a departure from the established course of nature.

With respect to the first, let me deprecate the imputation of presuming to enquire, how far the Great Author of nature may think fit to suspend those laws which he himself established, and to which he was pleased to conform his own agency—"he doth according to his
 "will in the Army of Heaven,* and among the inha-
 "bitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say un-

* Daniel iv. 35.

“to him what doest thou.”—This however seems to me an incontrovertible proof, that no further revelation of his will is now necessary to direct either our faith or practice; “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” says St. Paul, † “and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;” if, then, we have the same Scripture which was in the hands of the early Christians, and it is a fact not denied—if that Scripture was sealed by signs and wonders, by prophecies fulfilled, by a pure doctrine worthy of the Being from whom it proceeded; why, let us reverently ask, should the Almighty work a further Miracle in our days for the superfluous purpose of confirming that which needs no further attestation? This is an argument which must be assented to by all who hear it, and it is further confirmed by all analogy. Look abroad through nature, and you see one character refulgent through the Creator’s works—he does nothing in vain, and he never effects his purpose by complicated means when others more simple would suffice—he could reward the labours of industry at once by an abundant harvest—he makes it depend on the gentle vicissitude of the seasons, and the well known laws of vegetation—he could impart to the helpless infant, strength, and sagacity, for the supply of all its wants—the developement of these powers of mind and body, is the result of parental care, fostering the operation of natural causes. The same majes-

† 2 Tim. iii. 16 17.

tic simplicity pervades his every action as revealed in Scripture ;—with Malachi the gift of prophecy expired, because its necessity no longer existed ; the Messiah had been clearly announced, the end of his coming had been declared, the time, the place, the family—the circumstances of his birth, his life, his death—all had been foretold, and the voice of Prophecy was no longer heard. Manna from heaven, supported the Israelites through the desert—that miraculous supply was withheld when other food was granted. The chosen people whom God had led with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm for forty years, crossed the frontiers of the promised land, and “ the Manna “ ceased * on the morrow.” Paul, announces to the companions of his voyage, that not one should perish in the approaching shipwreck, and they escape † safe to land, some by swimming, some on broken pieces of the ship, but all without any miraculous intervention. The gift of tongues enabled the first teachers of Christianity at once to publish the glad tidings of the Gospel through the world—not a trace of such a power exists, or has existed since the Apostolic times ; and the reason is apparent, because, by natural means, the remotest nations can now hear each in his own language, the wonderful works of God. Look to that first dissension which sullies the pages of Apostolic history—a dangerous schism arises in the Church of Christ—the Jews were jealous of their national peculiarities, and some of them demanded that converted Gentiles should submit to the rite of cir-

* Joshua v. 12.

† Acts xxvii. 44.

cumcision—consult St. Luke and St. Paul * upon the nature of this question—it is denounced by both as a wicked effort to subvert the souls of believers, and to detract from the all-sufficiency of Christ's death for our justification. The Apostles assemble to deliberate upon the question—at that deliberation, Paul, and Barnabas, James, and Peter, John, and Titus, assist—it was the first recorded Synod of the Christian Church—there is much disputing upon the subject, and yet no Miracle is vouchsafed by God to direct them to a sound conclusion. They had the Scriptures of truth before them, and therefore further light was not imparted—they decide against the observance of the ceremonial law, and it is most interesting to remark, that the arguments which are adduced, are drawn entirely from the inspired volume. I need not suggest the well-known fact, that neither those who supported, nor those who opposed the glorious reformation of a corrupted faith, laid claim to miraculous interposition in their favour. The Scriptures alone were appealed to, and, God be praised, the cause of true religion triumphed. Am I influenced by undue partiality for the creed which I profess, in saying that Scripture needs not the persuasive of miraculous appearances,—read the parable of the rich man and Lazarus † “Send some one to my brethren,” said the tormented soul, “to warn them that they also come not

* Acts xv. The whole Epistle of Paul to the Galatians has reference also to this dangerous and unscriptural error. See Milner's History of the Church of Christ—vol. I. chaps. i. and vii.—See Note E.

† Luke xvi. 27.

“into this place of torment.” “They have Moses and the Prophets,” answers Abraham, let them hear their voice—“nay, Father Abraham,” rejoins the unhappy Spirit, “but if one rose from the dead, perhaps they would repent. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

Here is an explicit declaration, that no further revelation will be vouchsafed to those who have the Scriptures before them. If the Roman Catholic Church, therefore, possess superior purity, this declares a Miracle to be now superfluous; let them rest their cause upon the word of God, and if truth be on their side, it will prevail—truly the conclusion is forced upon me when I say, that these late pretensions are only what might be expected from a Church, which closes the book of God’s word from the poor, and refuses to let its testimony be heard. They have Moses and the Prophets—they have Christ and his Apostles—that is, they have the recorded revelations of God to guide them into truth—but they will not consent to their perusal, and therefore do they vainly endeavour to substitute the authority of divine interposition.

With those, therefore, who take the Bible as a sufficient rule of faith and practice, no further discussion is requisite to prove, that these recent cures are not the result of miraculous agency, for if no further revelation be necessary, in the present day, to enforce the precepts

of Scripture, or to guide us into religious truth, then surely was none vouchsafed by that Being, whose operations are ever commensurate to their cause: But let us view the question in another light—let us abstract from our consideration the important truth, that the arm of God no longer operates by signs and wonders—let us suppose the contrary established, in order that we may draw briefly from the Miracles of Scripture those distinctive marks which indicate a divine interposition, and furnish us with a moral standard to direct our judgment.—The awful responsibility of giving scepticism a pretext for unbelief, I cast on those who disparage the mighty acts of the incarnate God by a comparison with these recent cures; but it is expedient to teach the infidel, it will, I trust, be useful to inform the Romanist, wherein consists the strength of this external evidence of religious truth, in order to shew, that as none can do the works of Jesus Christ except God be with him, so nothing inferior should be accepted as a proof of miraculous agency.

A Miracle may be defined, an act which surpasses the power of man—a departure from the known and established laws of nature, produced either by the immediate hand of God, or, in consequence of his commission. It is true it is not always an attestation of a divine revelation, for such a character if essential would be irreconcilable with those predicted wonders which, in the latter days, Satan * shall have the power of working,

* See Note F.

and by which, if it were possible, he would deceive even the very elect—this instance excepted, however, its purpose is always the establishment of some revelation sent by God, and it seems derogatory to his power to suppose, that it will not be attended with such characters as shall distinctly prove it contrary to the usual course of nature.

It may be here, however, necessary for the sake of clearness, to shew the distinction between events which are extraordinary or providential, and those that are miraculous—few catastrophes, to mention the first illustration which occurs to me, were more awful than the fall of the Rossberg Mountain in Switzerland, which, in the year 1806, overwhelmed the beautiful valley of Lawerz—flocks, houses, and fields, were in one moment buried beneath the * ruins, and of its numerous and industrious population, but few escaped: one of these few, a young person, was saved by a beam falling in such a position, that it kept the superincumbent mass from crushing her to atoms. The catastrophe itself was extraordinary, because happily of rare occurrence, the escape we have mentioned was providential, but neither was miraculous—again—in one sense it may be said that every thing around us is extraordinary;—the mere exercise of the will causes the limbs to perform their several functions—a latent principle pervades the vegetable and the animal world—the seedling shoots into a towering tree—the crawling insect bursts

* See Note G.

from its reptile state and becomes an inhabitant of the air—the infant rises into manhood.—I look out upon the storm, it fills the heart with awe and terror to see its ravages—it passes away, the sun enlivens the face of nature, and adorns the landscape with its freshest colours. Why did not the storm continue—when the air was calm, what excited the storm—all these phenomena are wonderful—their cause is beyond the reach of our comprehension, and yet happening according to an established course, they are not considered miraculous; but if I see the dead brought back to life, the putrefying lifeless body restored to health and soundness, I recognize an event, not indeed more unaccountable than any thing we have mentioned, but we agree in calling it miraculous, because it contradicts not only our own, but all recorded experience, and if its purpose be manifestly the confirmation of some divine truth, we humbly receive the message which is so attested.

It appears to require no proof, but to result at once from the nature and attributes of God, *that every miracle shall have an end worthy of its author.* Sinners, do you ask why the Almighty God vouchsafed his wonders in Egypt—in the desert—in the holy land. It was to redeem a fallen race—it was to bring pardon and salvation to a guilty world—it was to raise us from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness—it was to dispel that spiritual darkness in which we lay, and to send the light of divine truth into our hearts—it was to satisfy the justice of God by paying the penalty of sin, and to exalt his

spontaneous mercy and loving kindness. The cup of wrath could not pass away, till it had been drunk to the very dregs. The curse denounced by God against sin, was to be inflicted, and at the same time greater privileges, than those which guilt had forfeited, were to be placed within the reach of our attainment. The apparently conflicting attributes of inflexible truth and pardoning mercy, were to be reconciled, and hence, whether his outstretched arm fought for his chosen people, leading them in safety through the wilderness, and supplying them with food, and water, and raiment, or the Prophets were commissioned to arouse the nation from its idolatry, or the Son of God manifested his power over the laws of nature; one refulgent character pervades these three great æras of miraculous interposition, and gives to the whole, harmony and consistency; Oh, how suitable to the Almighty being who devised and executed the wondrous scheme of redemption—mercy veiling as it were the more awful attributes of the divinity, at the same time that it took away every hope of pardon for unrepented sin.—My brethren—let us calmly ask, what is the asserted object of these recent cures? Is it to rear again the fabric of superstition—to rivet the chains of mental slavery which the Reformation burst asunder. No; praised be God, the clouds of error may be permitted for a while to darken our moral horizon, but no sign will be vouchsafed from God to uphold the great delusion. The rays of intellectual light are spreading through the world—the Gospel is going forth to all lands, and the sound thereof to the ends of the

Earth. In our own island, the star of knowledge has settled over the house where the young child is, and a blessing from God will prosper the efforts which are making to rectify the heart by improving the mind—Almighty wisdom, may for a time, permit ignorance to prevail, but Gospel truth is powerful and will finally triumph. Nay, I am not discouraged by these recent attempts to darken the light of true religion.—Superstition may find its votaries, but its pretensions are too monstrous to mislead the enlightened; they awaken enquiry, and enquiry will elicit truth—every year will enlarge the boundaries of Christ's kingdom on earth, until that predicted time when God shall write his laws upon every heart, and all shall know him, from the least even to the greatest.

I have said, that a Miracle which comes from God will have an end, important and worthy of its author—it is a second characteristic, that *it will be substantiated by evidence which cannot be impeached*, and such as excludes every suspicion of confederacy between the agent and the object; let me not be mistaken in what I say—I disclaim the intention of imputing dishonesty to any individual, but in an affair of such importance, it is just to expect that every possible objection be obviated, for I know, that if God vouchsafe a sign, he will either present it to my senses or else he will surround it with such characters of truth as even adversaries cannot gainsay. The Miracles of the Bible are attested by witnesses not merely honest, but above all imputation, men of sound

judgment, and free from bias—men, who braved every danger in support of what they advanced, and finally sealed their testimony with their *blood*. I have no warrant for saying, that the evidence before us is deficient in integrity, but surely it is deficient in sound judgment, or at least, it is liable to the charge of being biassed by previous opinions. An enthusiast may be sincere—Conventual habits may, and often have warped the judgment; the anticipation of popular respect might unconsciously influence the mind; secluded nuns, illiterate attendants, may be unqualified through ignorance, to pronounce either upon the change or its cause, and a natural wish to support a creed, which they doubtless believe the only orthodox, and within whose pale exclusively they are taught to expect salvation, might impart a higher colouring to facts than sober reason would warrant. It is from such considerations as these, and from no wish to convey a suspicion of dishonesty, that I have, in another place, turned from this testimony, which could not satisfy a reasonable mind, to those whom neither calumny nor prejudice could arraign; men of sober minds, competent both by talent and education to judge—skilled in the various phenomena of disease and health and whose temporal interests are *at least* not advantaged by their opposition to the advocates of miraculous agency—weigh this testimony well, and what is the conclusion—decidedly and beyond all controversy, it refutes the opinion so industriously circulated, that God has vouchsafed a miraculous interposition in favour of the Roman Catholic church, or of any of its members.

But, my brethren, the miracles of the Bible have also another character of truth. *In no case do they indicate previous preparation on one side, and in many there is not a trace of previous expectation on the other.* The widowed mother is about to consign her only child to the grave, when the voice of Jesus recalls the departed spirit and restores him to life and health; when the blind man is restored to sight, we learn incidentally, how unprepared he was for the blessing, for he knew not the cause of the approaching tumult till he heard it from the passing crowd. Our Saviour finds his disciple's mother sick of a fever, he touches her hand and the disorder leaves her. In his daily walks he meets the leper, the demoniac, and the dumb. When the multitude are fed, when Lazarus is raised, when the blood gushing from the ear of Malchus, is stanchcd, and the ear *re-produced* by a touch, there is no difficulty in discovering the absence of all arrangement or premeditation. In but one instance is the performance of a Miracle postponed to a future period.* And it is interesting to remark, that although, in some cases, faith is required, when the object to be healed is before him, in others it is not even mentioned, as an indispensable, and when a cure is performed at the entreaty of a third, the quality of faith is uniformly necessary, not in the person to be relieved, but in him who intercedes. There is no attempt at scenic effect in

* In the case of Lazarus, the Miracle is indeed postponed, but to no stated time, and the cause of the postponement is obviously to prove beyond all cavil, the fact of his death, and thus, to enhance the wonder of his restoration to life.

him who performs, no high sounding language in those who record it, the word is spoken and the effect follows. Multitudes come unto him and “he heals them all”:—every thing betokens majesty and simplicity; these, these are the essential marks of power divine, and where they are wanting, I solemnly deny the existence of a genuine Miracle, sent by God in attestation of Gospel truth.

There is still another test by which an asserted Miracle may be judged, not less satisfactory than those already adduced; *it should be so unequivocal in its nature, as not to be ascribable to natural means*: the very idea of such extraordinary interposition implying, that it is above the production of second causes. It is true, that some of the diseases cured by our blessed Lord, might have been removed by appropriate remedies, but let it be remembered, the truths of Christianity are authenticated by others, which admit no such solution, and are of a nature so exclusively, and necessarily miraculous, as to shut out all supposition of their having been produced by the intervention of natural agency; the truth of these therefore once irrefragably established, I find no difficulty in believing the others to have been wrought, not by second causes, but by extraordinary power. Now in all these recent * cures, I am free to say there is not one but

* It should be remarked that only two have come before the public properly authenticated, a few others resting upon anonymous report, or incompetent authority, have been mentioned; but admit them all, and what is the sum? About half-a-dozen cures out of as many thousand failures. Paley, would call these *tentative* Miracles, (See “Evidences of Christianity,” vol. 1. p. 339.)

may be accounted for by the influence which the imagination * is known to exercise upon a certain class of diseases, not one but may be attributed to the powerful excitement of religious enthusiasm. The diseases mentioned were diseases of function not organic, diseases of diminished power or deranged action, the sudden cure of which is in no degree inconsistent with the known laws of the animal economy. Shall I then hesitate to ask, are these the events which have been proclaimed “as new and splendid wonders?” Are these the Miracles which the Roman Catholic Prelacy and Clergy declare to be “not inferior to that of raising “the dead to life?” and the effect of which is to be the conversion of the Protestant world? Produce more unequivocal evidence than this—Produce a Miracle which admits of no double solution, perform one to which the ordinary powers of nature are known to be utterly incompetent, and which therefore can only be attributed to the intervention of miraculous agency—Let me see a man restored to sight whose blindness is occasioned by the total destruction of the visual organ. Let me behold an amputated limb † re-produced. Shew me a lifeless corpse restored to animation, stop the process of putrefaction, and raise the dead. Nay, shew me, upon unquestionable evidence, that such has been performed before adversaries, as well as friends; upon the sceptic or the unbeliever, as well as upon the credulous, or the enthusiast: I ask not even that it should be done in public, but let it be in the presence of witnesses competent to

* See Note II.

† See Note I.

judge that the event is real. Submit it to candid impartial investigation, and with all the powers of my mind, with earnest prayer to God for his assisting light, I will then enquire for what end such manifestations have been granted ; till then, let the credulous believe, let the ignorant wonder, but let it not be said that these are manifestations of divine favor, marks of spiritual superiority, evidences of the Almighty's desire, that we Protestants should re-enter that pale out of which the light of scripture conducted us.

From this head it results that *every Miracle will be not only instantaneously performed, but also complete in its effects* : let it be gradual or incomplete, and you lay it open to the imputation of being produced by a natural cause. The miracles of Scripture were complete in their effects :—it cannot be said that powerful excitement hastened the crisis of a disorder, producing indeed a favorable change, but leaving the Patient with all an infant's weakness to recover strength by gradual improvement ; perhaps to experience the heavier visitation of a relapse. The withered hand is restored,* whole like as the other, it no longer retains its shrivelled emaciated appearance. The blind acquire a sense they had never known—the organ is rendered capable of performing its proper function, the sightless eye-ball opens to receive the light of day, but till experience has taught the nature of external objects, their magnitude and dis-

* Matt. xii. 12.

tance, till the sight and touch have rectified the mistaken impressions of each alone, Bartimeus stands before his compassionate Redeemer, incapable of distinct vision. Was then the Miracle left thus incomplete? No, a further Miracle imparts to him, *at once*, that knowledge, which practice and reflection alone can give in ordinary cases; immediately * he receives his sight, and follows Jesus in the way. When the cripple, lame from his birth, was cured by † Peter and John, his tottering motions do not indicate the feebleness of a first effort at walking—he enters with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. Is this the character of these recent cures? Far from it, feebleness, emaciation, and a broken constitution, still remain to contradict the assertion of a miraculous interposition. Will it be said that the efficacy of these vaunted means, the prayers of a living saint, (alas the character is not to be found), or the intercession of a canonized sinner, was limited in its operation? No, my Brethren! in Miracles, there is no such degree of comparison as greater or less: the very essence of a Miracle contradicts the supposition; for each is a violation of nature's laws, and thus, in an equal degree, they are all a manifestation of that Being to whose omnipotence, all things are alike easy.

I have thus laid down those marks by which the evidence afforded by Scripture Miracles to the truth of revelation, may be appreciated. We have seen that a

* Mark x. 52.

† Acts iii. 8.

miraculous interposition whose object is to enforce that which is already so well attested would be superfluous—and even though it were not, that every Miracle which comes from God will—1st, have an important end; 2nd, will come to us upon evidence* unimpeachable; 3rd, will exclude all *suspicion* of confederacy; 4th, will be instantaneous; 5th, will be complete; and finally, will be above the operation of natural causes. Such was the restoration of sight to the blind, and of hearing to the deaf—such the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The end was mercy to a fallen world—the evidence † which attests these wonders is *superior* to that of any recorded fact in profane history—they cannot be accounted for on any known natural principles—they were not only complete in their effects, but also they were wrought in the face of day, before enemies as well as friends. They were Popish Miracles in a Protestant country? They were Protestant Miracles ‡ in a Popish country, they challenged investigation, they were opposed by a jealous Priesthood, and the result of every enquiry and of every attack only served to establish more incontrovertibly their truth and divine nature.

Come now, my Roman Catholic Brethren, place your hands upon your hearts, and in the name of truth, answer before God; can you still believe that a Miracle has been effected in these recent cures? Do the Roman Catholic

* See Note K.

† See Chalmer's Evidence and authority of the Christian revelation.

‡ Paley.

Clergy themselves believe it? Doubtless they do, for they came to that conclusion, as they declare, in the sight of God. I cannot therefore presume to question their veracity, but I must consider it a proof of something radically wrong in that creed, which counteracts all the effects of study and a liberal education, and paralyzes the powers of the understanding. Nay, I cannot withhold the expression of my deep astonishment, my unfeigned grief, that amongst the numerous assemblage, who investigated one of these Miracles, and who unanimously declared that they saw in it a prodigy not inferior to that of raising the dead to life, *not an individual in upwards of one hundred Pastors of the Roman Catholic Church* was found to vindicate the Miracles of our blessed Lord and Saviour, not *one dissentient* from an opinion, which I have good reason to believe, revolts every enlightened and disinterested layman of that persuasion.*

My Brethren, let me confess it, I entered upon this subject with conflicting feelings, I feared that the infidel who scoffs at revelation, would draw from these asserted Miracles, strongly attested as they are, and yet at the same time so weakly supported by facts, an argument that every record of the kind rests on the same foundation; I feared also the influence of this delusion, upon the weak and ignorant, even of our own communion. With respect to the *latter*, I pray to God, if any Protestant enfeebled by sickness, fearful of meeting

* See Note I.

that Being whose laws, perhaps, he has thro' life neglected, feel disposed to turn to this pretended power of healing ; as drowning men will catch at a floating twig, I pray to God, that the Holy Spirit may keep him from adding apostacy to disobedience. Upon the *former*, all apprehension is at an end. At first I trembled, like Eli, for the ark of God ; but now, my heart dilates with wonder at the unparalleled acts of a *merciful Redeemer*, with adoration of that Being, who out of darkness educes light, who makes even the wrath of man to praise him, and with a strengthened conviction that no claim to miraculous interposition, can stand, if it be founded in error, and supported only by credulity. Look abroad, My Brethren, into our City, at this moment—a claim to miraculous interposition is set up, it comes supported by testimony apparently the most respectable, it is not opposed, nay, it is announced by the Prelacy and Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, with all the influence of their name, their characters, and their station ; it falls in with the prejudices of the majority, there is thank God, no persecution for opinion ; none of those difficulties which opposed our Saviour and his Apostles, and yet, the whole fabric of delusion has crumbled into dust, at the touch of truth, it could not stand the ordeal of investigation.

In a year or two at most, men will despise themselves for being thus misled ; in after times, posterity will smile at the ignorance, the blindness of their fathers—they will

set it down beside the delusions of Animal Magnetism,* and the miraculous cures wrought† at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, those asserted interpositions which came in most opportunely to retard the downfall of a sinking cause. Christian Moralists will deduce from it subject of admonition, and of wisdom, but tell me where do we find any trace that the adversaries of our Lord, have been able to gainsay *his* Miracles? They were sifted by a jealous Priesthood, they were opposed by men influenced by hatred and disappointed ambition; they could not however, deny them, the most they could do was to ascribe them to the influence of Satan: he casteth out ‡ Devils, they said, by Beelzebub, the chief of the Devils: the unvarnished narration subsists, even to the present day, and we find no weakness, no inconsistency in the parts. Truly here is the finger of God; and hence, even from these modern delusions, I deduce an argument for Scripture Miracles, I take the substantiated narrative of facts, on which the claim to miraculous interposition is founded: from itself alone, not from the violence of adversaries, from itself alone, I prove the asserted Miracle to be a mere delusion, however true the recovery—I take the wondrous acts of an incarnate God, (forgive me, Oh my God, that I place them side by side, even in momentary comparison.)—If they could have been controverted, they would: they stood every test—like gold from the furnace, they came forth unaltered, pure as the Being

* See Note M.

† See Campbell on Miracles.

‡ Luke xi. 15.

who performed them. If I do not the works of my Father believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe * not me, believe his works. Yes Almighty God, we yield a full assent to the mighty evidence of thy heavenly mission, and taught by thy holy word, we unhesitatingly acknowledge, that as no man can do such works as these, except thou be with him, so all presumptuous claims to such Almighty power, will recoil upon the heads of those who advance them.

Here then I conclude an important and a painful duty, important, as all enquiries must be, which concern the Soul's Salvation, and painful because I scarcely can hope to stand acquitted of all hostile feeling towards a Church whose members I regard as Brethren, though at the same time, I freely arraign their errors, and also their most unfounded and unscriptural pretensions to spiritual superiority. There are, I doubt not, some who taking upon themselves to judge the weight of a responsibility, which the Minister of religion alone, is competent to appreciate, will perhaps think I ought to have suffered these delusions to sink unnoticed into merited oblivion; let it alone, they say, for if it be not of God, it † will come to nought: forgetting, that the appointed means of arriving at truth, and dispelling error, are calm discussion and unprejudiced enquiry—let no one lightly however, arraign the Minister of God, that he thus obeys the dictates of his duty—his feet stand upon holy ground, his voice is raised to instruct

* John x. 37, 38.

† Acts v. 37.

the flock of Christ committed to his charge, and it is his sacred duty to guard you alike “against error in religion, and viciousness of life.”

Roman Catholics, take with you my parting counsel. Receive it in the same spirit in which it is offered, Study the sacred Scriptures for yourselves, apply to that test the peculiar doctrines of your Church. Call no man your master upon Earth, that is, take nothing connected with Salvation upon human authority, for one is your master even God ; and it is his holy word, which alone can impart that knowledge, which maketh wise unto Salvation. May the Almighty God assist you in your enquiries, may he open your hearts to understand the Gospel.

I have an admonition also for you, my Protestant Brethren, I trust you will not receive it with less attention than you have hitherto manifested. You belong, as we all believe, to a pure Church—to you the oracles of God are laid open, do you then take the holy Scriptures as “a light to your feet and a lantern to your paths?” Do you worship God, as he requires, in spirit and in truth, and looking up to him through Jesus Christ alone, do you seek that guidance of the spirit which alone can keep you in the narrow path, that leadeth unto life? My Brethren, let this obvious application of our subject, sink deep into your hearts. Recollect that the professors of the purest faith ought ever to shew forth the purest conduct ; recollect

that "to whom much is given, of them will there be much required." And now, may Almighty wisdom grant a final triumph to truth, over error and delusion; may he grant us also, that whilst we contend for pure Christianity, we may not forget its plainest dictates; but on the contrary, bearing and forbearing, resisting error, in the spirit of Christian love, and shewing forth in our lives the mild, but most persuasive, eloquence of a good example, the holy Spirit may, at length, make us to be all of one mind—cherishing the same hopes—resting upon the merits of the same Redeemer—and acting upon that new commandment, that "we should love one another, even as God for "Christ's sake hath loved us." Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, for Brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the Mountains of Sion, for there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life for evermore. *

* Psal. cxxxiii.

F I N I S.

Notes.

NOTE A. page 6.—By these words, I allude to a Pastoral address of Dr. DOYLE, Titular Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; announcing the cure of MISS LALOR, and without hesitation I pronounce it the most injudicious and unclerical publication I have seen in these angry times. “It is “meet and just” he says, “that God, for whose name and faith we suffer “should (*thus*) cast upon us a look of compassion, lest we faint in the way.” —What these sufferings are, he had previously detailed: “our Religion is “traded, our rights are withheld, our good name is maligned, our best “actions are misrepresented; crimes are imputed to us, against which our “very nature revolts, our friends are silenced, and our enemies insult us, “and glory in our humiliation;” and in another passage he adds “a *momentary cloud has overcast the legislature, a bad spirit has breathed on their “Counsels.* Some of those who lead in the Senate, have adopted a false “maxim; others have unwisely exalted an unholy league over the king’s “Subjects; and placed it perhaps *too near the Throne:*” with the truth or falshood of this, I have *nothing to do*; it is however inflammatory language, and, coming from a messenger of Peace, it betrays a sad forgetfulness of his Ministerial office. How different the example of our common Redeemer. He never harangues upon the “rights” of the Jews? He never ministers fuel to the inflamed passions of the ignorant? He makes no allusion to the *politics* of his day. One spirit pervades his discourses, peace and good will between man and man. His character was that predicted by Isaiah.—(Oh, that every Minister of God would make it his example) “*He did not “strive nor cry, neither did any man hear his voice in the Streets.*”

Since these pages were put to Press, a Pamphlet has appeared under the signature J. K. L. addressed to the Lord Lieutenant, in vindication of the Civil and Religious Principles of the Roman Catholics. I recollect the same initials to a most illiberal vituperation, of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin; and it is too notorious, to be denied, that both are from the pen of DR. DOYLE. I shall therefore place in *juxtaposition* with the above quoted, irritated, and irritating mixture, of religious and party feeling, a passage in this more recent publication, in order that the reader may endeavour, if possible, to reconcile them. The Author is speak-

ing of the inquiries which DRs. MURRAY, and DOYLE, thought it their duty to make into the cures of MISS LALOR, and MRS. STUART, and of their subsequent announcement to the public. He adds, ‘they intended ‘no offence, my Lord, *to the professors of any creed*; they made use in ‘their publications of *no uncharitable reflections*; they exhorted their own ‘brethren to gratitude and thanksgiving; they directed their thoughts to a ‘better world; they besought them to bear with injuries rather than inflict ‘them; and to give glory to God, and to God alone.’

DR. DOYLE, is a man of undoubted talent, but talent is always more respectable and more influential, when it is recommended by consistent principles.—I have seen four publications ascribed to the same author, The first, I regret to say, too obviously lies open to the imputation of supplying fuel to that flame of discord which interested men excited about a year since, against his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, and in no very meek language, it questions not only his episcopal authority, but his episcopal rights;—it should be confessed his second publication was useful: it became his office to remove the delusions of the ignorant, on the subject of Pastorini’s prophecies—his third was the above-mentioned Pastoral address, in which the recent cure bears but a small proportion to the angry inference he draws from it.—The fourth is the recent address to LORD WELLESLEY. According to its language, the Roman Catholic Prelates meant *no offence* in vaunting, not the purity, but the *superior* purity of their Church; they meant *no political allusion* in claiming these Miracles as a special interposition from God to *enforce the Roman Catholic claims*, or to recal us wanderers to the fold. According to him the Roman Catholic Church does not oppose the perusal of the holy Scriptures; nor can it be induced, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Sectarians to *relinquish the reading and study of the word of God*!! I confess I cannot reconcile these passages as coming from the same person, and I care not whether the charge of inconsistency be substantiated by comparing the two publications which bear DR. DOYLE’s name, or those two which only bear his signature, or by comparing DR. DOYLE’s language on the one side, with that of J. K. L. on the other.

NOTE B. page 6.—‘At this day the religion of the church of Rome is ‘more properly corrupt than false. It is not a false religion; for the professors of it receive, with the fullest submission of the understanding to ‘its mysteries, the whole Gospel. They fear God. They trust in Christ as ‘the author of salvation. They worship the Three Persons in the Unity of ‘the Godhead. The Roman church therefore hath not renounced the truth, ‘but she has corrupted it; and she hath corrupted it in the very same manner, and nearly in the same degree, in which the truth of the patriarchal ‘religion was corrupted by the first idolaters; adding to the fear and wor-

‘ship of God and his Son, the inferior fear and worship of deceased men, ‘whose spirits they suppose to be invested with some delegated authority ‘over Christ’s church on earth. *See Horsley’s Sermons on the Resurrection, ‘page 53.*

NOTE C. page 6.—‘Since, then,’ reasons DR. MURRAY, in his Pastoral address, p. 15, ‘the same blessed Redeemer now makes the unbloody ‘sacrifice of his body and blood, the visible means of calling back to life ‘and health the victim that was ready to descend into the grave, is it un- ‘reasonable to suppose, that he does so, in his mercy, for some general ‘and exalted purpose? To awaken, for instance, our slumbering ‘piety, and animate the faithful throughout his Church, to fly with more ‘confidence, more reverence, more love to those holy Altars, on which ‘the living victim of Salvation is working such wonders?

‘Perhaps, too, this may be among the means of mercy, whereby he ‘wishes to effect the gracious purpose mentioned in his Gospel. “Other “sheep I have, that are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they “shall hear my voice, and there shall be made one fold and one shepherd.” ‘Perhaps the voice of these facts issuing from the bosom of his sanctuary, ‘and publishing the glory of God with the loudness of thunder, may strike ‘upon the ears and hearts of many to whom the voice of our ministry ‘could not reach. Who knows how many of our dear Brethren, who are ‘wandering from this “one fold,” *may be thus conducted back to venerate that holy Mass,* on which the hand of the Omnipotent has impressed, ‘in such effulgent characters, the attestation of its sanctity.’

NOTE D. page 11.—This Doctrine, as Archbishop Tillotson proves, in his admirable discourse upon the subject, has no warrant in Scripture, is directly opposed to all the evidence of reason and the senses, and was not heard of in the church of Christ for more than five centuries after our Saviour. the primitive Fathers Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Origen, Cyprian, and even St. Augustine, that great authority to whom the Latin church so often appeals, plainly shewing that the opinion received by Protestants in the present day, was that upheld in the purest ages of the Church. I refer the reader to this able discourse, but cannot refrain from giving the following unanswerable passages :

‘For there are two things necessary to a Miracle; that there be a *supernatural effect* wrought, and that this effect be *evident to sense*. So that ‘though a supernatural effect be wrought, yet if it be not evident to sense, ‘it is to all the ends and purposes of a Miracle as if it were not; and can be

‘no testimony or proof of any thing, because itself stands in need of another Miracle to give testimony to it, and to prove that it was wrought.— And neither in Scripture, nor in profane authors, nor in common use of speech, is any thing called a Miracle but what falls under the notice of our senses: A *Miracle* being nothing else but a *supernatural effect evident to sense*, the great end and design whereof is to be a sensible proof and conviction to us of something that we do not see.

‘And for want of this condition, *Transubstantiation*, if it were true, would be no Miracle.—For a sign or Miracle is always a thing sensible, otherwise it could be no sign. Now that such a change as is pretended in *Transubstantiation* should really be wrought, and yet there should be no sign and appearance of it, is a thing very wonderful, but not to sense; for *our senses perceive no change*, the bread and wine in the Sacrament, to all our senses, remaining just as they were before: And that a thing should remain to all appearance just as it was, hath nothing at all of wonder in it: we wonder indeed when we see a strange thing done, but *no man wonders when he sees nothing done.*’

Again, he says:—‘Suppose, then, *Transubstantiation* to be part of the Christian doctrine, it must have the same confirmation with the whole, and that is Miracles: But of all doctrines in the world, it is peculiarly incapable of being proved by a Miracle. For if a miracle were wrought for the proof of it, the very same assurance which any man hath of the truth of the Miracle, he hath of the falsehood of the doctrine, that is, the clear evidence of his senses. For that there is a Miracle wrought to prove *that what he sees in the Sacrament is not bread, but the body of Christ*, there is only the evidence of sense; and there is the very same evidence to prove *that what he sees in the Sacrament is not the body of Christ but bread*. So that here would arise a new controversy, whether a man should rather believe his senses giving testimony against the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, or bearing witness to a Miracle wrought to confirm that doctrine; there being the very same evidence against the truth of the doctrine, which there is for the truth of the Miracle: And then the argument for *Transubstantiation* and the objection against it would just balance one another; and consequently *Transubstantiation* is not to be proved by a Miracle, because that would be, *to prove to a man by something that he sees, that he doth not see what he sees.*’

NOTE E. page 15.—I have followed the opinion of most interpreters in supposing, that the journey mentioned in the second chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians, was the same recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. It adds but little strength to my argument, however; for

even though John and Titus were not present, the others undoubtedly were together with the elders of the Church—and had God seen fit to afford them any other light than Scripture, he would surely have done so through some one or other of these “Pillars” of the Church, Men, on whom the miraculous gifts of the holy Spirit were known to rest in the largest measure. Paley (*Horæ Paulinæ*, Chap vii.) reasons ingeniously against it; on the other hand, Doddridge, Locke, Whitby, and Campbell, hold the affirmative of the opinion which I have stated. The Biblical student who consults these conflicting authorities, will find the investigation interesting, and, I think, will arrive at the same conclusion as that mentioned in the text.

It may be collected from Pages 13—16, that I am disposed to limit the period of miraculous interposition, to the first ages of the Church, and indeed if every Miracle sent by God in attestation of divine truth, will fulfil all the conditions laid down in this discourse, and that holy Scripture containeth every thing necessary for Salvation; it is a legitimate inference that Miracles shall cease with the occasion which called them forth. With the exception of those standing Miracles, the dispersion and present condition of the Jews, (See Deut. xxvii.) the wandering habits of the Arab tribes, Gen. xvi. 12. the state of Babylon, of Tyre, of Egypt.—I have met but one in the course of my reading, which appears to possess the characters of a genuine miraculous interposition, I mean that which frustrated the impious design of the apostate Julian, to discredit our Saviour’s Prophecy, by re-building the Temple of Jerusalem, (See Warburton’s discourse on Julian’s attempt.) The Almighty thus corroborating to a remote age the divine nature of his Son. I am above the dishonest affectation of wishing to appear deeply read in the writings of the early Fathers of our Church—I shall not therefore pretend to say, that no Miracles were wrought in *times posterior to the Apostles, and those immediately commissioned by them*; but this I may be permitted to say, I have endeavoured to investigate with candour, those particular instances adduced by Cavc, Mosheim, Milner, and Dr. Murray; and can truly aver, there is not one so plainly invested with the characters of truth and reason as to satisfy my mind. The fall of rain which refreshed the Roman Army, hemmed in by the Marcomanni, and ready to perish with thirst, (A.D. 174,) was surely no more than a providential occurrence; though Eusebius and other christian writers have magnified it into a Miracle, vouchsafed in answer to the prayers of the Christians serving in the army of Marcus Aurelius; (see Mosheim, vol. 1. page 153.) The voice that cried to the aged Polycarp, as he entered the Stadium, where he was about to suffer martyrdom, “Be strong, Polycarp, and behave yourself like a man;” the appearance of the flame, which is said to have formed an arch round his body, without hurting him; the fragrant smell which arose from the burning pile, and the blood which gushing from his wounded side, extinguished the fire, (see

Cave's Lives of the Primitive Fathers, page 122. also Milner's History of the Church of Christ, vol. 1. page 218)—are all capable of explanation from natural causes ;—see Bishop Elrington's Donnellan Lectures, page 270, for a most convincing solution for these phenomena, the occurrence of which we do not deny, though we deny them to be miraculous. With respect to those adduced by DR. MURRAY, a few words are necessary. Tertullian's well known challenge to the heathen, to bring a demoniac into open court, and that any Christian would cause the unclean spirit to proclaim aloud his own wickedness, and to come out of him, I look upon as deserving no other answer than this—Suppose his challenge had been accepted, and he himself the individual called upon to redeem the pledge ; will the Roman Catholic say, that a heretic (as he undoubtedly was, and excommunicated by the Bishop of Rome,) *he* could have performed a Miracle?—I view it as an interpolation of some monkish transcriber, or if not, an hyperbole, (a figure in which the false taste of an African would be likely to abound,) signifying the natural influence of christianity, to root out the corrupt suggestions of Satan. In like manner I dispose of the Miracles related by the “great St. Ambrose,” to have been wrought in Milan, in 386, on the finding of the relics of SS. Gervasius, and Protasius. St. Ambrose was assuredly a pious man, but in his day, the light of the Gospel burned but dimly ; and I do not think it irreverent to receive his testimony with caution, and to doubt the soundness of his judgment, when I find him exercising a severity upon malefactors, foreign to his nature, and characterised as uncharitable, and even encouraging women of impure character, to resort to his house, (see Milner vol. ii. p. 175,) that he might thus escape the weight of Episcopal responsibility. It arose it is true, from modesty, from conscientious scruples, but it was not on that account, less deserving of the name of hypocrisy and falsehood. In the same spirit of impartial scrutiny : I reject St. Augustine's narrative of the Miracle performed on a youth named Paul, as he was “praying to God before the Shrine of “St. Stephen.” At the first blush it savours of the cloister, but lest I should appear to Roman Catholics, to view these unscriptural events, through the medium of prejudice.—Let me demand of the Roman Catholic Clergy, do they not differ from this Father upon the great question of predestination : and if they reject him as a guide on this subject, as they undoubtedly do, is it unreasonable that we should consider his judgment warped upon the subject of miraculous interposition, as well as upon that of a partial and universal redemption. I confess I have often wondered at the authority which this great Apostle of predestination possesses in a Church where every tenet whether true or corrupted, differs from that of St. Augustine, upon the important subject of justification. Again as St. Augustine's narrative is the main stay of DR. MURRAY's opinion upon the continuance of miraculous powers, I beg the candid Roman Catholic to consider how the following passages are to be reconciled with DR. MURRAY's quotations. *Accipimus majores nostros, visibilia Miracula secutos esse, per*

quos id actum est ut necessaria non essent posteris: that is, since the world formerly believed by the Miracles which were wrought at the first preaching of the Gospel, therefore Miracles are no longer necessary: St. Austin, de verâ religione Cap. 25. Again, in his work de Civitate Dei, lib. 22. c. 8. (the very part from which DR. MURRAY extracts the wondrous cure of Paul and his sister,) he says, *Quisquis adhuc prodigia, ut credat, inquirat, magnum est ipse prodigium, qui mundo credente non credit.*—Which Stillingfleet thus quaintly but aptly translates.—He that seeks for Miracles still to induce him to faith, when the world is converted to the Christian faith, he needs not seek for prodigies abroad, he wants only a looking-glass to discover one. For as he adds, *Unde temporibus, eruditis et omne quod fieri non potest respuentibus, sine ullis Miraculis, nimium Mirabiliter incredibilia credidit Mundus*, whence came it to pass, that in so learned and wary an age as that of the Apostles, the world should, without Miracles, have believed things so strangely incredible? The intention of Miracles adds Stillingfleet, was to “confirm a divine testimony, and therefore, why “should Miracles be continued among those who believe the doctrine to “be divine, the Miracles wrought for it to have been true, and the Scriptures which contain both to be the undoubted word of God.” (see Origines Sacræ, page 349.) It is not my business to reconcile these passages with those quoted by DR. MURRAY.—I think it demonstrative that they do not come from the same person, and it appears no more than a dictate of right reason, to chuse that side which accords with Scripture, and to reject as spurious, that which contradicts its authority.

NOTE F. page 17.—I cannot refrain from condemning that view of these recent cures, which considers them real miracles wrought by the “Man of Sin,” conceiving it like a surrender of the outworks of the Protestant religion, to make such a concession. In the latter days, says Scripture, false Prophets shall arise, and shall shew great signs and wonders—and in Rev. xiii. 14, the beast “shall deceive by the means of those “Miracles which he has power to do.” These will be doubtless supernatural, having all the signs of a Miracle sent by God, except one—their end will be to deceive even the very elect, and to turn them from righteousness. Now, such cures as those of Mrs. Stuart, and Miss Lalor, are of natural and frequent occurrence, and it argues but little discretion, whatever be the zeal of the author, to say, not only, that he admits the reality of the Miracle, but also, “it cannot be denied, that Roman Catholic Priests often effect cures that cannot be accounted for by natural “causes.”—*Credat Judæus Apelles non ego.*

NOTE G. page 18.—There is a most interesting account of the catastrophe in *Manuel du Voyageur en Suisse par Ebel*, Tom. 1er. p. 149,

under the description of "Art"—the mass which detached itself from the mountain was 1000 paces broad, 130 paces thick, and nearly a league in length. To form an adequate idea however, of this scene of desolation—which looks like the ruins of a former world—it must be visited.

NOTE H. page 25.—Dr. Jacob, in a very useful Pamphlet, has collected together a great number of examples, illustrating the power of the imagination upon the human body; and, indeed, the experience of the Roman Catholic clergy might have furnished them with many such, if, in their eagerness to claim a divine interposition in favour of their church, they had not most unaccountably forgotten such a natural explanation of Mrs. Stuart's recovery. It is not my intention to go over the same ground as Dr. Jacob, nevertheless it is expedient to suggest to the reader, that the blush of shame or offended modesty—the paleness produced by fear or anger—the unbidden tear which starts at the call of sympathy, sufficiently prove the influence of the mind over certain operations of the animal œconomy, which are not under the control of the will. It requires also no ingenuity to shew that the imagination produces disease, and removes it. Terror, anger, immoderate joy, have frequently occasioned apoplexy, and even death; whilst, on the other hand, the paralytic, the gouty and the rheumatic, have risen suddenly from the bed to which pain and debility confined them, and fled with rapidity from some imminent danger. A Physician of eminence has often cured his patients with the very same remedies prescribed in vain by the humbler practitioner, and substances in themselves perfectly inoperative have removed the imaginary complaints of the hypochondriac, or quieted the mind of the real sufferer until nature had operated a cure. I was myself personally acquainted, with a foreigner, who, during the despotic reign of Bonaparte, believed himself the object of that extraordinary man's hatred, and under that mistaken impression fled from France to Holland, to Germany, to Italy, and finally to Switzerland; the evil he dreaded was imaginary, but its effects upon his constitution were not the less real on that account. He was suffering under all the complaints which loss of rest, and appetite, and strength, and derangement of the digestive organs produce, when his Physician suggested a course of moral treatment which should convert the imagination from being an enemy into a useful ally; it was cautiously hinted to the patient, that perhaps the Emperor's resentment could be appeased—he was told of a powerful friend in Paris, who would use his influence in his favour, and happily it succeeded in exciting the master springs of hope and fear; the pretended consequence of the interest used was, a permission to make his own house his prison;—subsequent applications obtained, with apparent difficulty, further indulgences, until at last the influence of his family procured from the French Minister a formal notification of Bonaparte's forgiveness:—the consequence may be anticipated, his recovery was com-

plete, and, in my opinion, was no less extraordinary than that of Mrs. Stuart.

Nor can I withhold an illustration of the same physiological fact which our own city recently afforded. A respectable woman, enfeebled by long sickness, and given over by her Physician, expressed her wish to see the Clergyman of the parish; her family had been collected round the bed, and they all joined in those devotional exercises which were suited to her awful situation. Whilst thus occupied, her husband, overcome with grief at the approaching separation from his wife, was seized with epilepsy, a disorder to which he was subject. The dying woman was roused by the event—she started from her bed, and was amongst the most active and judicious in applying the remedies usual in such cases. This is a common occurrence, but recent events have shewed us, that, in the hands of a less rational ministry, it might have been magnified into a miraculous intervention in support of our Reformed church—but

“ Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis ; ”

the purity of that church, in doctrine and in practice, must rest upon other grounds. By the Scriptures alone it is to be judged—and we trust it argues no presumptuous boasting, to say, that if it be weighed in that balance of the sanctuary, it will not be found wanting.

NOTE I. page 25.—In Matthew xv. 31, we find the mention of this amazing instance of the divine power. The Greek is

Ὦντε τὰς ὄχλους θαυμάσαι, βλέποντας κωφὰς λαλῶντας, κυλλὰς ὀγυῖς, χωλὰς περιπατοῦντας, καὶ τυφλὰς βλέποντας· καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν Θεὸν Ἰσραὴλ.

“ Insomuch that the multitude wondered when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.”—Some have supposed the words κυλλὰς and χωλὰς, translated maimed and lame, to signify the cure only of a disease which deprived the patient of the use of the limbs, but in a relation of this kind, referring as they do to the acts of the OMNIPOTENT, it is clear they should be taken in their fullest latitude, and the learned reader will see them unequivocally applied to signify the want of a hand or a foot, in Matthew xviii. 8, and Mark ix. 43.

Εἰ δὲ ἡ χεὶρ σου, ἢ ὁ πῦς σου σκανδαλίζει σε, ἔκκοψον αὐτὰ καὶ βάλε ἀπὸ σου· καλὸν σοί εἶναι εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν χωλὸν ἢ κυλλόν, ἢ δύο χεῖρας ἢ δύο ποδας ἔχοντα, βληθῆναι εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον.

“ Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them

“from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, *χολὸν* *ἢ* *κυλλὸν*, (wanting a foot or a hand) rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.”

To suppose that the Being who raised the dead, and quelled the storm, and gave sight to the born-blind, who healed *all manner* of sickness and *all manner* of disease among the people, Matt. iv. 23, who, when followed by great multitudes, healed them all, Matt. xii. 15. who *reproduced* an ear, (Luke xxii. 51,) did not also reproduce an amputated limb, as I have seen recently advanced by an advocate for these modern miracles, betrays a deplorable ignorance, or else a most unworthy perversion of sacred writ. Be the anonymous writer what he may, I solemnly denounce him as an apostate from that church to which he professes to belong, and if “a beneficed clergyman” of our establishment, unworthy of his high vocation.

NOTE K. page 28.—There are obviously two modes of investigating a subject like the present. The one involving an enquiry into the evidence which attests the fact asserted to be miraculous—the other that pursued in the preceding pages. I shall here, therefore, subjoin the observations upon the former, which I submitted to the public through the medium of the diurnal press, not indeed as necessary to the line of argument I have pursued, but because it affords a distinct and independent exposure of the transaction to which it refers. The task was not difficult, for Dr. Murray had honestly published to the world the grounds on which “the collective wisdom and intelligence of the Roman Catholic clergy” had formed their unanimous opinion, and the kindness with which Dr. Mills had furnished me with answers to the queries, which, as his Parochial Minister, I thought it my duty to put to him, enabled me to throw some additional light upon the subject.

The following are the material parts of the observations which were published in the *Warder Newspaper* of the 6th and 13th September.

“My conclusion that the Cure was not miraculous, has been formed upon a consideration which has not yet, as far as I am aware, been insisted upon—I mean *the credibility of the testimony on which the asserted miracle rests*. In saying this I do not mean to impeach the veracity of the different persons, whose affidavits are appended to the Pastoral Address. I impute dishonesty to no man; but I must be permitted to deny their competency on another account. When the object is asserted to be of so important a nature as the conviction and conversion of the Protestant world, the miracle should rest upon the *highest possible authority*. Is the recovery of Mrs. STUART of that nature? Was not the disorder con-

tracted under circumstances causing great mental depression? Was it not nourished by her conventual habits?—by abstinence?—by seclusion?—perhaps, by hypochondria? Can the other witnesses be certain that her apparent incapability of motion or speech did not arise from the mere absence of the will? Nay, have we not reason to fear that these witnesses, however unimpeachable on the score of honesty, are influenced by the same springs of action as the rest of mankind.—Visit Mrs. STUART today, the cause of excitement still continues, and her convalescence advances, whilst crowds of ignorant gazers look up to her with veneration and * astonishment; the celebrity of the event has imparted to her, in the eyes of the vulgar, a kind of sanctity, the odour of which has passed even upon her obscure and illiterate attendant, CATHERINE HOSEY, and elevated her, as well as her companions, into an importance, the anticipation of which might, unintentionally, obscure the judgment even of more enlightened minds. I, therefore, turn from them as exceptionable evidence, and, for the same cause, deny the competency of the Roman Catholic Clergy of Dublin. I do not doubt their “wisdom and intelligence,” though I seek, in vain, for its proof in DOCTOR MURRAY’s Pastoral Address. I do suspect their judgment, and if I may be allowed, I unhesitatingly condemn, as indiscreet, to say the least, the manner in which the whole transaction has been presented, not to the understanding of the well-informed, but to the superstitious and illiterate, *ad captum vulgi*, in the truest application of the words, however unintentionally they may have incurred a censure, which the best and most enlightened of their own persuasion, hesitate not to express.

“Rejecting, therefore, the testimony of Mrs. STUART’s immediate friends and attendants, and meeting the unanimous opinion of Dr. Murray and his Clergy with unqualified, but respectful dissent—I turn to the certificates of Dr. Mills, Dr. Cheyne, and Mr. Macnamara; for here I find, at least, equal respectability, equal veracity, and let it not offend if I say, sounder judgment. Their testimony also has this further recommendation, that self-interest would have dictated the very opposite statement to that which they have given. A Miracle would demonstrate that human remedies were inefficacious—*Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus*—whereas *their* incredulity, so directly opposed to the opinions of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, might injure their professional practice. It is most

* A friend of mine has informed me of one of those Scenes which daily took place amongst the crowds of ignorant people who resorted to the Convent of Ranelagh to see Mrs. STUART—One cried—Oh! that I were worthy to receive her blessing, another said, she is a second Lazarus, while the patient herself, pale, emaciated, and feeble, slowly walked into the room and as slowly retired!!

true, the character of these Physicians shields them from the suspicion of being swayed by such unworthy considerations, and their conduct on this occasion has added to their reputation; whilst, on the other hand, I should be heartily sorry to impute to the Roman Catholic Clergy such an unworthy exercise of their influence, as awakening, among their flocks, any hostility against those who conscientiously differ from them.

"It is not necessary to repeat those details which are so very revolting to delicacy. That Mrs. Stuart was a great sufferer, is acknowledged on all sides; and, even though it were denied, the remedies used sufficiently indicate the severity of the symptoms. There was occasional paralysis of the lower extremities; the sight was sometimes affected; the power of articulation was, at intervals, suspended. It is distinctly stated, however, that these symptoms were intermittent, and even "*repeatedly removed by the usually approved remedies*;" nay, further, that the important organs of digestion, which were subject to frequent derangement, were as frequently "*restored to their healthy action by the use of appropriate remedies*." From the month of October last, however, the health of the patient gradually declined; for six months previous to the 1st of August she was confined to bed from weakness in her limbs. About the middle of July, Dr. Mills states, that he saw her, and *was informed*, that she had not spoken for three weeks. On the 31st he was "*called in*" to see her, when she replied to his questions by signs. Dr. Cheyne's statement is substantially the same. He visited but once, and of course formed his opinion from the report of Dr. Mills. Mr. Macnamara however adds, that on the 31st of July, her pulse was quick and her countenance pale; symptoms, it should be remarked, which might be observed in a patient whose only complaint was a nervous head-ache. And it is too striking a circumstance to be omitted, that not a scintilla of evidence is adduced to prove—nay, but abundance to disprove—"that she was reduced to a state of grievous and hopeless infirmity, for the relief of which all the resources of human skill were in vain expended,"

"Two reflections, however, suggest themselves from what has been said, and I doubt not but they have occurred to many others. Why does not Doctor Mills state more explicitly his own actual observations in these two visits of the middle and 31st July? There is a manifest reserve here, quite inconsistent with the minute details of former visits. Why does he give us only the information he received from others, or that which Mrs. Stuart communicated by signs, instead of stating the results of his own actual examination? What was her appearance? She was pale, and her pulse quick. Was that all? Did her speedy dissolution appear likely? Was she altogether incapable of motion? Was she sinking into a state of insensibility? Did he give up her case as hopeless?—Was he required to do so? Did he cease to prescribe for her? Let these questions be borne in memory—we shall have the Doctor's answers to the majority.

"Let us now turn to the joint certificate of Drs. Mills and Cheyne, and Mr. Macnamara, written three days after the Miracle is said to have been accomplished. Her pulse was quick on the 31st of July. Were its beats reduced on the 4th of August? No; they were still 120.—She was confined to bed on the 31st of July, through weakness in her limbs. Had they acquired strength on the 4th of August? No: she acknowledged she was unable, from "the weakness of her limbs," to walk in the Convent grounds. Were the four issues *bonâ fide* healed? No; three might "be considered as healed," being without dressings; but the fourth, that in her left arm, "was open, and freely discharging, having made no progress in healing."

"There occurs to me, as I compare the separate and joint certificates of the Physicians, a doubt, which I candidly acknowledge has left in my mind something like a suspicion of the sworn witnesses. I am anxious not to give offence. I desire, with sincerity, to conduct this enquiry dispassionately; to contend not for victory, but for truth; to seek her even though she were to be found ranged on the side of a profession, from whose creed I conscientiously differ; but the candid adversary will not expect me to stifle my real opinion. DR. MILLS it is stated, was "called in" on the 31st July. MR. MACNAMARA was not formally summoned; but very opportunely, he was attending a patient in the Convent, and he assisted at the consultation. In her affidavit, Mrs. Stuart avers, that, in the hope of recovering, "through the intercession of Prince Hohenlohe," she fulfilled the conditions prescribed by him, "and prepared herself for a sacramental confession." What this preparation may be, we learn from DR. DOYLE—"a devotion, for nine days preceding, in honour of the holy name of Jesus, and in honour of St. John Nepomescene."* Why, let me ask, was Dr. Mills called in? Was it intimated to him that his patient had no faith in his prescription?—that, on the following day, she hoped for health at the hands of a mightier physician? I freely acknowledge this has not the air of an open, honorable proceeding. There is about it an appearance of plan and contrivance—of secrecy and concealment—of duplicity, unworthy of those who were, on the following day, to receive "the most adorable Eucharist." It almost seems as if the result was foreseen, and the physician was "called in" to be an unconscious character in the drama; as if,

* It is interesting to remark, that the mention of this Saint, who is so prominently put forward in DR. DOYLE's Pastoral Address; does not *once* occur in the subsequent Address of DR. MURRAY.

I am glad of it; for though it may seem right and fitting to a Roman Catholic, to pay the same devotion to a creature, and to the GREAT CREATOR, to me it appears Blasphemy.

in the sure anticipation of a miracle, the Doctor was "called in" to declare that her case was hopeless—that human aid could not restore her. I make no charge of such insincerity. I honestly state my impression. I shall be happy to see it removed.

Let me subjoin another difficulty, which needs explanation. The physicians state, that on the 4th of August, three of the issues might be *considered as healed*, being without dressings; but that the fourth was freely discharging, and had made no progress in healing. How, then, let me ask, shall I understand this expression, in the joint certificate?—"On Friday, the 1st of August, *the peas*, we understood, were removed "from all the issues." What became then of the five kidney-beans in the left arm, *the open issue*? When were they removed?—or were all the issues discharging on the 31st of July? Am I to understand that *all* the peas, and *all* the beans, were withdrawn on the 31st of July, and *not one previously*? Reverend Sirs—Reverend Ladies, answer these questions, in the name of truth.

Gentlemen of the faculty! when did you see the issues? Did you inspect them on the 31st of July? Mention the day—describe their state. Were they *all* open—*all* discharging? Tell me, further, what you mean by your expression "*considered as healed*." Would it not have been more definite and correct to say, that *matter was merely encrusted on the sores*? Does not the word *healed* convey the idea that they were covered with a new and perfect skin, and not with what, in common parlance, we call a thin scab? And is it not a notorious fact, that, so far from ranking it amongst extraordinary events, that an issue should dry up and cease to discharge, the greatest difficulty consists in keeping it open, as all who use this remedy well know? Nay, is it not much more uncommon that the issue, from which the beans had been withdrawn, should continue open, than that the other three should, in similar circumstances, have dried up? I shrewdly suspect that the four issues exhibited, on the 4th of August, only *four different stages of healing*; the inference from which must be, that these peas and beans had been by degrees withdrawn, and that, perhaps, the gradual abstraction of these stimulants causing the irritation which they excited to subside, nature and a strong constitution had full liberty to effect a cure.

I have thus stated the several particulars in which the medical certificates were defective. I shall now subjoin the communication which I had with DOCTORS MILLS, and CIEYNE, and MR. MACNAMARA, on the subject of what I conceived deficiencies in their statements:

**“TO THE MEDICAL GENTLEMEN WHO VISITED
MRS. STUART, AT THE CONVENT, RANELAGH.**

“GENTLEMEN—

“It appears from your statement, already before the public, that you were professionally called upon by two Roman Catholic Clergymen, for a statement of facts, relative to the health and recovery of Mrs. Stuart. —May I also, as a Protestant Clergyman, anxious for further information upon this subject, and satisfied that it is from facts alone the truth can be elicited, request that you will favor me with answers to the following queries.

“I am, Gentlemen, &c.

“CHARLES BARDIN.”

“TO DR. MILLS.

“Were the issues submitted to your inspection in the months of June or July, 1823?—Answer—No.

“Was Mrs. Stuart able to contract or extend her limbs on the 31st of July, 1823? Answer—She was.

“Did Mrs. Stuart seem, on the 31st of July, 1823, or at any time, to be in a state of stupor? Answer—Not on the 31st July; but at other times, when apoplectic, I have observed Mrs. Stuart in a state of stupor.

“Were there any fatal symptoms present on the 31st of July, 1823? Answer—No.

“Did you prescribe for Mrs. Stuart on the 31st July, 1823? Answer—I did. “T. M.”

“TO DR. CHEYNE.

“Did you see the issues on the 17th June, 1823?—(this was the only visit DR. CHEYNE made previous to the 1st of August)—Answer—I did not. “J. C.”

“TO MR. MACNAMARA.

“Did you see the issues in the months of June or July, 1823?—Answer—No. “R. M.”

I have now fulfilled the duty which I felt myself called upon to undertake; and, with great respect for the public, Roman Catholic and Protestant, I leave the matter to their deliberate reflection. I took up my

pen to disabuse the public in general, and my own flock in particular, of a gross delusion ; and to vindicate, so far as I could, the pure character of that Church to which I belong, from the attack, not indirect, but open and avowed, of the Roman Catholic Priesthood.

We have now, (if not all the information to be wished for,) at least, a sufficient ground of facts to assist us to a conclusion : and the testimony is from men, competent by education, by medical skill, and by freedom from prejudice, to judge of the phenomena of Mrs. Stuart's illness and recovery. One of these Physicians has gone farther ; he has broken through the restraint of professional reserve, and in the following letter, boldly stated his honest conviction, that the recovery was no miraculous interposition of God, but, on the contrary, might be accounted for from rational causes.

TO REV. MR. DALY.

Dublin, August 22d, 1823.

Dear Sir,

I felt it necessary to see Dr. Mills, and Mr. Macnamara, before I could answer your letter of the 21st. Considering that the friends of Mrs. Stuart, of Ranelagh Convent, *might not think it expedient to publish our Certificates* relative to the state of her health, we resolved not to give an opinion on the subject, and not in any way to commit ourselves individually.

These Certificates having been published, I have, in consequence of your letter, waited upon Dr. Mills and Mr. Macnamara, and as they leave me to the exercise of my own discretion, I can have no hesitation in answering your questions.—To the first, I reply, that *there was not, in my opinion, any thing miraculous in the change which took place in Mrs. Stuart's health.*—To the second, that *her case can to my entire satisfaction be accounted for on natural principles.*

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.

J. CHEYNE.

In this letter, it will be seen, there are two distinct propositions ; they are both, it is true, matters of opinion—but the value to be attached to them does not altogether depend on the professional character of Dr. CHEYNE—however deservedly high his reputation as a physician. Even though he had remained silent, we have now a sufficient body of facts to guide us to the same conclusion.

Before I conclude I would address myself briefly, but earnestly, and in the spirit of cordiality, to the Roman Catholic Priesthood.—

As you value the character of sober minded, rational men, seek not to uphold the superiority of your Church by such means as these; let the word of God be the touchstone of truth—and if its inspired pages shew the greater purity of your Church, we will yield you an assent the more prompt and cheerful, that it is always our most sacred obligation, as Protestants, to take the Bible as the standard of religious truth; act upon the same principles yourselves, and we shall shortly be the members of the same Church. In the mean time, let us both inculcate, in our several places, the important truth, that sincerity is entitled to respect, even in its errors; and that, however we may differ upon other subjects, there are three which we should all unite in inculcating upon our several flocks. They are these—worthy of being inscribed upon the palms of our hands; worthy of being engraven on our hearts, because they comprise the sum of our duties, Christian as well as social; to fear God, to honour the King, and to love one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath loved us.

NOTE L. page 29.—To Dr. Murray's Pastoral, and the subjoined affidavits, I think we may apply the words of Voltaire, when speaking of Mr. Montgeron's work, detailing the miracles wrought at the tomb of the Abbe Paris:—" *Si ce livre subsistait un jour, et que les autres fussent perdus, la posterité croirait que notre siècle a été un tems de barbarie.*"

NOTE M. page 31.—The delusion of animal magnetism, to which the text refers, is another strong illustration of the power of the imagination in removing certain diseases. Its author, M. Mesmer, a German, pretended that *the magnet* exercised a certain influence upon the human body, by means of which a skilful operator had the power of curing various disorders of the nervous system, and of forming a correct judgment of the origin, nature and progress of the most complicated diseases. Such large pretensions awakened the attention of the faculty in Paris. It could not be denied that many nervous patients had been cured, and though the absurdity of supposing the existence of such an agent in nature was sufficiently obvious to men of sense, it was judged expedient by the King of France, that a solemn investigation should be made into the matter. The Committee appointed for the purpose, in 1784, was composed of the most respectable and highly-gifted men in France, and amongst them were the celebrated Dr. Franklin, MM. Bailly and Lavoisier.

When these commissioners entered upon the investigation, their attention was first directed to the mode of operating upon the patient, and in truth it is sufficiently curious to deserve being detailed.

A number of persons were placed round a circular chest, or platform of

wood, about a foot high, the upper part being pierced with holes, from which there issued branches of iron, jointed so that the ends could be conveniently applied to the diseased part; a cord, which passed round their bodies, connected them with each other; besides which, each was required to place the thumb of his left hand between the forefinger and thumb of the right hand of his neighbour. A piano-forte was placed in the corner of the room, on which different airs were played; during which, the operator, fixing his eyes upon the patients singly, moved a rod of iron before the face, above and behind the head, and over the diseased parts, occasionally pressing the fingers forcibly against the belly, the operation being often continued for several hours together.

All this apparatus doubtless appears very absurd, and yet the effect it produced upon those who were weak enough to believe in the efficacy of the treatment, was wonderful. Some were soon affected with coughing and spitting; others again experienced slight pains and considerable perspirations; whilst others were thrown into violent convulsions. The commissioners, in some instances, found that these convulsions continued for three hours, when the patient expectorated a quantity of phlegm, streaked with blood. The fits were also characterized by violent and involuntary motions of the whole body—by spasms of the throat, by wandering motions of the eyes, accompanied by piercing shrieks, weeping, immoderate laughter, and hiccup. They were generally preceded or followed by a state of languor, or a degree of drowsiness and even stupor. The least unexpected noise made the patients start, and even a change of measure in the air played upon the piano-forte affected them; a lively movement always increasing the violence of their convulsions. Such, then, were the phenomena (of the reality of which no one could doubt) produced by the operation of this new agent. The convulsive and lethargic state was considered the crisis of the disorder, and it was incontrovertible that many had been thus cured.

It is not my intention to detail minutely the several steps of their investigation. The reader will find them fully explained in Rees's Encyclopedia—Article, *Imagination*. It will suffice to say, that no experimental enquiry could have been more ably prosecuted, and no philosophical truth more clearly developed, than that *the imagination was able to produce all the extraordinary operations in the animal æconomy which were ascribed to magnetism*. The commissioners first observed, that *women were always the most readily affected*, and that as soon as one was thus taken, the rest were similarly seized in a very short time—they ascertained that magnetism had no influence upon the healthy, nor yet upon the diseased, if the patient was incredulous, or had no *previous expectation of the effect*. They found that a woman who, when magnetized in the forehead, the back and the stomach, said she felt a heat or a flame moving to each part along with the hand of the operator; when her eyes were bandaged, no longer felt this

effect in the parts to which the magnetism was directed, and for the obvious reason, that her sight no longer assisted her imagination. They likewise found that when being previously blindfolded, she had been taught to believe she was magnetized, or when actually magnetized without being previously informed of it, in both cases alike she felt nothing. Their next experiment ascertained that the crisis was brought on merely by influencing the imagination, and that without magnetizing, convulsions could be produced. One woman felt shivering and pain *when informed that she was magnetized*, though the operator did nothing; and another, in like manner, on learning that the operator was outside the room, felt all the symptoms of a person magnetized, though she had not been touched, nor her pulse felt. From all these experiments, they felt warranted in declaring that all the phenomena should be referred to the powerful influence which the imagination exercises upon the animal œconomy. At present Animal Magnetism has sunk into merited contempt, and we should almost doubt that any could have been duped by its pretensions, if it were not established that Mesmer and his pupils realised large fortunes (one of the latter, Mr. Deslon, £100,000,) by levying contributions upon the weak and credulous.

After such a signal detection, it might be supposed that no delusion of the same kind could ever hope to find votaries among the well-informed, and yet in 14 years subsequent to the period already mentioned, (in 1798,) an American, named Perkins, introduced into England a method of curing certain diseases, by applying two small metal rods, which he called *tractors*, to the part diseased. Pamphlets were published announcing astonishing cures, and many now living can recollect that they were the subject of general conversation—a public establishment, called the Perkinian Institution, was formed by a benevolent society for the purpose of curing the diseases of the poor, without medicine or even medical advice. We do not mean to *impeach the veracity of those who attested the cures*, but it is now universally acknowledged that the whole was founded on delusion, and its success only attributable to the influence of the imagination upon the corporeal frame. Dr. Haygarth produced the same effects precisely upon five rheumatic patients, by means of *two wooden tractors* of nearly the same shape as the metallic, and nearly resembling them in colour, four out of the five feeling immediate relief, and one of them, on the false tractors being moved gently over his arm, so far recovering, that he was enabled to move about, and carry coals through the hospital, though previous to the experiment, he could no more have lifted his hand from his knee, than “if a hundred weight were upon it, or a nail driven through it.”

I shall not detain the reader by any further illustration of that which must be sufficiently obvious—the imagination was the great agent in producing the effects we have mentioned, and it is sufficiently ascertained,

that the cures effected through these different delusions, were not less wonderful than that of Mrs. Mary Stuart. In the latter case, Prince Hohenlohe may be compared to Mesmer and Perkins—religious enthusiasm winding up the patient to the highest pitch of excitement, and thus enabling the imagination to exercise its powerful influence. The previous preparation, the ceremony, &c. all afford us so many natural causes to explain the effects produced, they are in fact the *metallic tractors* of Perkins—the jointed rods of Mesmer; and we might as well suppose that the cures these latter performed were by divine miraculous interposition, as imagine the recovery of a nervous patient an evidence either of her “being a favored child of heaven,” (see Dr. Doyle’s Pastoral,) or that Prince Hohenlohe was a “favorite servant of God.”—(See Dr. Murray’s Pastoral.) In denying, however, that these individuals deserve the title thus presumptuously given to them—I would be understood as passing no uncharitable opinion. I believe both the Prince in Germany, and the Nun in Ireland, to be the objects of divine regard—but so also are all who live; all, praised be the name of God, are the children of his love, the heirs of redemption; and, if it be not their own wilful neglect of the means mercifully vouchsafed, all who ask, shall obtain salvation through the blood of him who purchased it.

THE END.

ERRATUM.—In the Note to Page 8, for *publicly*, read *sublimely*.



